

# Depression: Anger Turned Inward

by Greg Mooers

**D**epression is sometimes defined as “anger turned inward”. So, are Americans angry, or have we turned it inward? In the '60s we were angry. Think back to the 1971 film *Network*, with its psychotic television anchorman challenging his audience to go to their windows and shout, “I’m mad as hell, and I’m not gonna’ take it anymore!” By the '80s, we began denying our anger with conspicuous consumption, starting with luxuries and ending with anti-depressants. By the '90s, America was taking blows from newer and more nebulous enemies, as witnessed by the tragedy of 9/11. Terrorism is the ultimate anger-turned-outward. Let’s take a look at the making of a terrorist. Start with a victim, add a little pressure, and what do you get? A bigger victim. Add more pressure, and you’ve got a terrorist who says, “Nobody will ever notice the horrible things that are happening unless I do something drastic!” And there is really only one thing to say to a terrorist, **“WHAT DO YOU WANT?”**

So, what is the root of rage? Have you ever gotten so angry it surprised you that you could get that angry!? Sure you have, we all have. Because I was a monk for eight years, I still can’t help looking at life from both an inner and outer perspective. The best definition I’ve heard of “anger” is “a thwarted desire”. Isn’t it true that every time we got angry we were committed to something — wanting something that was either blocked or violated? Until we identify our desires, and learn to make powerful, non-violent requests, we are likely to be haunted by such blind-siding rage. Or consider this alternative: Woody Allen once said, “I don’t get angry, I just grow tumors!”

However, when we learn to identify our deepest desires and how to make direct requests, and then take powerful and appropriate action — we become what the world calls “heroes”. Perhaps the only difference between a hero and a terrorist is which side you’re on, but there is one other

distinction: heroes are going after what they really want and terrorists are trying to destroy what they don’t want. Therefore, I believe that people who are not going after what they really want are potentially dangerous pains in our necks. So I find myself often saying: **“Ok, that’s what you don’t, what is it you do want?”**

For years, I have been a personal consultant for clients who are at the pinnacle of their success yet they are unfulfilled. They include Academy award winners, Olympic gold medalists, and leading professionals in many fields. One of the most powerful proofs of how the inner world creates the outer is my work in a famous rehab center in Malibu: The Canyon. While most rehab centers put you through their program, The Canyon will put you through YOUR program. If you’ve ever signed up for a weekend workshop and gone through someone’s program, but your life didn’t change, the reason is that YOU HAVE YOUR OWN AMAZING PROGRAM within you! My personal approach to clients at The Canyon is, “I am committed to seeing you so fulfilled in your life, so passionate about your career and your relationships, that you forget where you left your drugs.”

In a way, addiction is a form of self-terrorism. Instead of “fighting” addictions, we can learn to tap into the power behind our “anger” (which left alone will turn inward and become depression). Would we even bother being angry if we weren’t committed to something? Next time you get angry ask yourself this question: **“What am I committed to that was violated?”** When people get angry at you, ask them, **“What are you committed to that I violated?”** Just watch what happens! I have had the most amazing results with these two questions. The goal of good communication is to find out what’s most meaningful to both you and the other person. We can then begin to outgrow the defensive stance of safety and survival, and we can embark on the exciting opportunity

of acting, rather than just reacting.

Indigenous cultures called this type of transformation a “rite of passage”. This is why we sign up for ropes courses, triathlons, and intensely competitive sports — to emulate this rite of passage. Hundreds of years ago, life itself was a rite of passage because life was dangerous — one had to survive the elements, hunt to survive, and risk getting one’s head chopped off for saying wrong thing. That’s the purpose of a rite of passage — to prove that we can take care of ourselves (not easily learned in school or at your desk). Yet, for some of us, survival was not enough, and we became seekers, and began to learn the laws of the heroes.

In my studies as a monk, I discovered an interesting pattern to addiction: All addicts started by taking a “drug” to kill a very specific “pain”. It is the pain of emptiness, loneliness or worthlessness. The more people “care” the more acute the pain seems to be and the worse the addiction. So track this: People who really care but haven’t been shown what to do with their caring (had no rite of passage) are in pain so they take a drug (alcohol, sex, narcotics, cigarettes, etc.) to kill the caring. But when you know what you care about and how to create a career around your caring, you end up with a passionately fulfilled life and don’t need to keep substituting different drugs. Sound like a plan?

*Greg Mooers is the author of “Our Hearts Virtue.” His CD’s, workbooks, and interactive website [www.Lifecamp.com](http://www.Lifecamp.com) are the core of a revolutionary process of self-discovery that have inspired Olympic gold-medalists and Academy award winners. Call Greg at 310-428-0400 to learn your heart virtue.*

